

March 3, 2022

Testimony In SUPPORT of

S.B. 176, AN ACT CONCERNING SHARED CLEAN ENERGY FACILITIES.

Dear Honored Co-Chairs Senator Needleman and Representative Arconti, and Distinguished Members of the Energy and Technology Committee,

I am writing in SUPPORT of S.B. 176, AN ACT CONCERNING SHARED CLEAN ENERGY FACILITIES.

My name is Janet Bellamy, I am a resident of Ashford and a member of the Ashford Clean Energy Task Force. I write this testimony as an private citizen.

This bill will (1) Modify existing energy caps involving shared clean energy facilities, (2) permit electric distribution companies to own solar power generation facilities within the Shared Clean Energy Facility program, and (3) to allow commercial and industrial customers in the non-residential renewable energy tariff program to use their entire roof space for generation.

Recent Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Inventory, conducted by our Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP,) shows that GHG emissions are increasing, not decreasing. Connecticut is not on target to meet it's mandated goals for the reduction of greenhouse gases.

In order to meet these mandated goals changes must be made to allow increases in the amount of local solar and storage capacity. Outdated regulations limit how much solar municipalities and businesses are allowed to install. We need regulations that encourage solar if we are to decrease our dependence on fossil fuels.

By allowing the use of entire rooftops or parking garages and expanding the Shared Clean Energy Facility program this bill would increase solar capacity with the added benefits of;

- Decreasing the use of valuable farmland or forests for solar arrays as rooftops become available.
- Increased local solar will benefit underserved populations advancing energy equity.
- Improving resilience of the grid through local solar or clean energy.
- Decreasing energy costs to businesses and municipalities.
- Creating jobs and stimulating the economy.

This bill would allow people who do not have appropriate sites for solar on their property to have the advantages of solar through shared solar. I have a friend in New York who gets a 10% reduction in her electric bill through the use of shared solar. We should have the same option in Connecticut.

Due to the outdated and unnecessary regulations, more than half of interested business owners and municipalities cannot reduce their electric costs by installing solar on their premises. Connecticut legislators can fix this problem. I ask you to amend S.B. 176 to increase the cap on commercial solar from 50 to 100 megawatts (MW) and the cap on Shared Clean Energy Facilities (SCEF) from 25 to 50 MW. Raising these program caps can be done at negligible, short-term ratepayer cost.

I encourage the committee to pass S.B. 176 with amendments. By supporting renewable energy this bill will help address air pollution, inequity, and the climate crisis while providing economic benefits.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet Bellamy
Ashford, CT